

Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

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FM AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9366

INFO AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

C O N F I D E N T I A L WELLINGTON 0748

EXDIS

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: ETRD EAGR NZ

SUBJECT: 1975 MEAT IMPORT PROGRAM

REF A) WELLINGTON 693 B) STATE 57282

1. DIRECTOR OF TRADE POLICY OF DEPARTMENT OF TRADE AND INDUSTRY, R THAWLEY, HAS JUST INFORMED ECON/COMM COUNSELOR, IN RESPONSE TO LATTER'S QUERY, THAT A DRAFT REPLY TO US PROPOSAL WAS ON THE DESK OF ACTING MINISTER FOR OVERSEAS TRADE, MR W FREER, FOR HIS APPROVAL. THAWLEY HOPED MINISTER WOULD ACT ON IT BEFORE COB TODAY, MARCH 21.

2. IN RESPONSE TO FURTHER PROBING, THAWLEY SAID THE GIST OF SUGGESTED MESSAGE WAS THAT GNZ URGED USG TO PUT THE UPPER IMPORT LIMIT AT 1200 MILLION POUNDS. IF THIS WAS NOT POSSIBLE, THEN GNZ WOULD ACCEPT THE 1180 MILLION POUND IMPORT LEVEL "UNDER PROTEST". THAWLEY SAID GNZ WANTED ASSURANCE OF A "SATISFACTORY TREATMENT" OF SHORTFALL ALLOCATIONS. ALSO, THAWLEY POINTED OUT, OUR PRESENTATION DID NOT GIVE DETAILS ON TREATMENT OF CANADIAN BEEF. HE SAID GNZ DID NOT WANT TO FIND THE US AND CANADA "BECOMING FRIENDS AGAIN" WITH MORE CANADIAN BEEF BEING EXPORTED TO THE US.

3. THAWLEY SAID THAT THE PROPOSED GNZ REPLY TO THE US HAD BEEN DISCUSSED BY TELEPHONE WITH J WALDING, MINISTER FOR OVERSEAS TRADE, WHO IS MAKING A VISIT TO THE CARIBBEAN AND
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IT REPRESENTED HIS VIEWS.

4. THAWLEY MADE A POINT OF REFERRING TO THE VOLUNTARY EXPORT RESTRAINT ARRANGEMENT BETWEEN THE US ON THE ONE HAND AND AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND ON THE OTHER AS A "FORMAL AGREEMENT".

5. THAWLEY ADDED BY WAY OF CLARIFICATION THAT ACCORDING TO GNZ CALCULATIONS THE FIGURES WE GAVE HIM ON THE NZ ALLOCATION ON MARCH 14 (REFTEL A) WERE INCORRECT. HE SAID ACCORDING TO GNZ WHEN THE 18.1 MILLION POUND IMPORTS FROM CANADA, UK AND BELIZE ARE SUBTRACTED FROM THE 1180 MILLION POUND TOTAL, THE 21.7 PERCENT NZ SHARE WOULD BE 252.8 MILLION POUNDS INSTEAD OF 255.8 MILLION (REFTEL B).

6. ECON/COMM COUNSELOR STRESSED THE IMPORTANCE USG ATTACHED TO RESOLVING THIS MATTER URGENTLY. THAWLEY PROMISED TO INFORM EMBASSY AS SOON AS MINISTER HAD APPROVED MESSAGE AND OF ANY CHANGES.
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